

Madam Speaker,

We have heard how reforming our health care system will benefit both those with and without coverage. But what does reform mean for the millions of our seniors?

It will mean a stronger and improved Medicare program. More services will be covered under the program, including free preventative services. The safety and quality of care will also be improved through payment and delivery system reforms to encourage better care.

In addition, reform will bring tighter oversight by creating new tools to fight waste, fraud, and abuse within Medicare, as well as save costs by eliminating gross overpayments. Medicare itself will be protected by extending the solvency of the Medicare Trust Fund, by five years.

Most importantly, our bill will mean lower drug costs for seniors by allowing the government to negotiate drug prices on behalf of Medicare beneficiaries and by closing the 'doughnut hole' that thousands of seniors in my district alone, hit each year.

Madam Speaker, security and stability is what reform means for our seniors and why, most recently, 63 percent of AARP members support the House passed version of health care reform.